**What Immortal Hand (Sorbet)**

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# What Immortal Hand (Sorbet)

by AtticusCrete

Summary

The growing awareness of skilful hands, that save, that change, that make things anew.

Will watches Hannibal save Devon Silvestri's victim. And hopes.

Notes

For a range of people - Competency kink; Hands; Very. Short. Sentences;

For all round Awesomeness.

They walk back to the car, both absorbing the events of the last few hours. Hannibal pulls his jacket on, and without thinking Will helps him with it, straightens the collar, smooths down the lapel. Runs his hand across his shoulder. They keep walking.

At Will's car he opens the passenger door first for Hannibal and then goes round the front of the car to get in on the driver's side. He takes a deep breath and then lets it out slowly. Turns the key in the ignition,

'Alright?'

'Thank you. Yes. Perhaps a little tired'

Will glances at him. He resists the temptation to push Hannibal's fringe out of his eyes. Will pushes the manual transmission into reverse, then with one hand on the steering wheel and one hand resting on the back of the passenger seat, head turned peering through the rear windscreen, he slowly backs out. There are plenty of police and Feds and emergency personnel still hanging around and even nudging one of them would be bad. And easy to do in the dark beyond the spread of the emergency lights.

Hannibal is conscious of Will's hand resting just beside his shoulder. He'd been aware of the brief sweep past as Will made the casual everyday move, but it didn't stop him from wondering what would have happened if Will had paused. If his hand had come down on Hannibal's shoulder and not the seat back.

With a shift in his seat Will brings his hand back round, changes gear, and then smoothly drives forward. It is the first time that Hannibal has really been conscious that Will's car has a manual gearstick and not an automatic. He watches as Will rests his right hand on the edge of the steering wheel, holding it loosely and using that hand to change gear. When his hand rests atop the knob of the gear stick his knuckles briefly whiten against the scuffed vinyl cover.

'Have you always driven a manual?'

'Stick shift? Sure. They used to be cheaper, more economical to run too. And easier to fix. Well. Before they went electronic.'

'Could you have fixed one?'

'Yeah. Maybe still could. I do engine stuff all the time. Help the guys out in the team, Alana. You know. Nothing too big and I won't touch anyone's brakes for love or money'

'Love or money?'

'If brakes go it's a nightmare. I'd rather not be responsible. Everything else? Well you can usually pretty well slide off on to the hard shoulder. Brakes though? Not so much.'

'Have you had bad experience with brakes?'

'Nothing serious'

It's what he says. Nothing serious. But he doesn't elaborate. Hannibal watches out of the corner of his eye, waits. With Will it is almost always better to wait,

'Kid cut my brake lines in school. Meant to be a joke. Nearly wasn't. Scared me shitless'

'The loss of control?'

'The feeling of pressing down on the pedal and nothing happening. Keep doing the right thing and still nothing happens. Nothing at all. The absence. It was a long sense of nothing at all, weightlessness, noiselessness, no responsibility, no possibility. Oddly final.'

'Frightening then? If it scared you?'

'What scared me was how much I liked it.'

They're both quiet then and Hannibal continues to watch as Will changes gear, grasps the indicator to signal a change of lane or turn, holds the steering wheel, looser, tighter. With a high degree of unconscious competence. What you see when a driver no longer has to consider each separate element and add it up like a mathematical challenge which is always a few numbers ahead. What you see when someone doesn't just know what they are doing, but is what they're doing. One degree further on than the conscious competence Hannibal displayed earlier. A little show. He lets a small smile cross the corner of his mouth.

There's a long silence. It's not uncomfortable. Just the sound of the engine, the tyres on the road. Other cars at intersections, speeding up, slowing down. The occasional siren in the distance noisily important. And in the car, the sound of them both breathing, almost in sync, the sound of the stick shift, the indicators, for a few miles the occasional swipe of windscreen wipers.

Will clears his throat,

'How was it back there? In the ambulance'

Hannibal looks at him for a moment and then away and out of the side window. Thinks about the question, and what may be prompting it. Considers what might have moved Will to enquire. What he saw. What he felt about what he saw.

He lifts one of his hands and holds it out in front of him, a ghostly jaundiced pale shape in the darkened car, lit only by the sodium street lights of the city. He has good hands. Steady. Strong. Well formed. Talented. He closes the hand into a fist and releases it again. Stretches the fingers out, the tendons shifting under his skin. Lets them relax again. Sees the slight creasing of skin on the back. Age walking apace with him.

Were he to look at the other hand he'd see the tiniest scar from where the additional finger was removed many, many years ago. Barely noticeable unless you know to look. Just a thin silver line.

He holds both hands up beside each other as though making some kind of comparison. First the backs and then the palms. Observes them. The differences and similarities. The callous

from holding a pen. From holding a knife just so. The lines embedded there, heart, life, head. His dominant hand the conscious self, his subordinate hand signifying the unconscious mind. If he believed in such things.

He runs one hand over the other, testing out the joints, flexing the muscles again, feeling the shape of the finger nails. Cleaned and well tended. Maybe a little dry blood under one nail. From the victim in the back of the ambulance. Stabilised now. Saved, by his hand. His experience and skill.

Will doesn't ask again, thinks this might be Hannibal's answer to his question. He changes down a gear.

'Almost there.'

A short while later he signals and then pulls in to the rear of the driveway outside the Baltimore house. He doesn't switch the engine off, lets it idle.

Hannibal doesn't say anything but turns towards Will and is maybe working up to saying something when Will casually reaches over and takes Hannibal's nearest hand.

He holds it lightly palm to palm and traces over the back of it with his other hand. Runs a finger along from the wrist to the tip of the middle finger. Down the first finger and then swooping round the fleshy web between the thumb and fore finger and along the thumb, then around the pad and back down the outside of the hand and brushing back, lightly, a feather touch, along past the wrist.

Keeping the touch faint he turns Hannibal's hand over, and traces the lines there, with just a whisper of a stroke. One after the other. He rests his first finger over Hannibal's pulse. Can feel it jump just a fraction. He strokes the palm tenderly. Finding it by touch. And lifts it to his face.

Then, with a careful loose hold that's barely there he strokes his face against Hannibal's palm, his short beard catching, but mostly soft. He runs Hannibal's fingertips over his top lip, down the side of his face, he slightly dampens his bottom lip and pulls Hannibal's thumb along it, the slightest friction there so it catches.

Hannibal might make the smallest of noises and Will looks up at him as he opens his mouth and pulls the first two fingers of Hannibal's hand into his mouth and lazily sucks. Tongue working around and between them. Hums just a little so the buzz vibrates against Hannibal's skin.

Hannibal lifts his other hand and strokes the side of Will's face. It's almost dark outside, and they're caught together in a silent world inhabited just by touch. The low rumble of the engine an anchor of a kind. Leisurely, Will changes the fingers in his mouth, licks along the longest middle one and smiles as he sucks at just the tip. Still keeping his eyes on Hannibal, who has his eyes closed and his throat swallowing tightly as Will swirls his tongue between the knuckles of his hand. Hannibal's breathing picks up just a little.

Just enough. He opens his eyes, swallows again, one hand still in Will's hair, the other being kissed, fingertip by fingertip, Will still looking at him, eyes dark as he kisses Hannibal's palm.

'Come inside?'

Will runs his mouth along the side of Hannibal's smallest finger. Lips at the finger tip. Licks there,

'Ask me again'

Hannibal twists his hand round and pulls Will's palm close, closes his eyes, scents it deeply. The faint tang of leather from the steering wheel cover. Maybe dog. Some kind of soap, coal tar, perhaps. And Will. He echoes Will's action and kisses the knuckles, runs just the tip of his tongue along the back of Will's hand and looks back up at him,

'Please?'

With his unmoored hand Will reaches and switches off the engine. They're caught for a moment by their own reluctance to let go of each other's hands. But neither of them laugh. With the car doors shut, and then locked they're both on the driveway and in the dim glow of the outdoor light Hannibal holds out a hand again for Will to take. He grasps it firmly, warm palm against warm palm. Catches it back to his mouth and kisses it across and then down the wrist, as far as the sleeve of Hannibal's jacket will allow.

They stand like that in the drive for a few minutes, the kisser and the kissed. The touching and the touched. Only a shift of wind with a faint dampness to it reminds them they could be indoors where it's dry. Hannibal crosses his body with his left hand to reach into the pocket where his house keys are, fishes them out, juggles them slightly awkwardly. Strange how some things come easy either way and some things don't.

Inside. Door closed. Locked. The lights left un-illuminated. Just faint differences in the intensity of the shadows. And the touches. Without words there is further kissing, each fingertip, along the seams, exploring a delicate series of bones, twisted, and whole fingers sucked and licked.

Then clothes. Fingers working, buttons, zips, toggles, cufflinks, fabric smoothed, slid, discarded, folded. Hands. Touching. Soft. Firm. Insistent. Trailing.

Under the crumples Will is all smooth skin with the occasional tracery of lines and scars, the map of his lives to date. And so responsive to even the lightest touch. Hannibal is tighter and more muscular than Will had anticipated. Because he had anticipated. Or maybe just hoped. Rawly. With minimal expectation. Seems foolish now, that low level prediction of disappointment. This has the touch of inevitability. Of fit. Purpose. Perhaps even a kind of truth, the silent sort.

Keeping in the shadows they use their hands to see, to drink deeply, to fetch and learn. Lips and tongues follow fingers. Fingers that are pioneering, exploring, finding out secrets. The accompaniment at first is the caressing sweep of skin on skin, a brushy sound. Later it's a

slicker sliding sound, damper somehow. Later still, the wet slap of flesh pushed up against flesh faster and harder. And fast breaths and a catch in the throat, a stutter and pause and clipped exhale. An abbreviated moan. A small breathy laugh. A name. Whispered low against a shoulder, open mouthed, worshipper and worshiping.

A sharp gasp and the sounds of mutuality. Relief. Presence. Acceptance. A stroked back, a clasp and rocking. Maybe some soft tears. Hannibal takes Will's hand and licks the remains of Will's come from his fingers, cleans his own hands too. Lets himself be kissed, Will tasting himself from Hannibal's lips and tongue. Takes Hannibal's hands and rubs them through the mess of come from both of them on his stomach, pulls Hannibal closer, chest to chest, sticky. Puts Hannibal's hands in his own hair, holds tight to Hannibal's neck and kisses him with open adoration. Both of them wet, slippery, thoroughly exposed.

They both stay quiet, on the rug in the foyer of Hannibal's home. Just. After a few minutes Hannibal pulls Will to his feet and draws him by the hand slowly up the stairs to the second floor of the house and a shower. Where they will learn each other in the light, now that they have known each other in the dark.

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